

Media, Pa – To provide constituents with the proper information and tools to compete in the workforce and care for themselves and their families, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) hosted his first Working Families Resources Summit today at Interboro High School. The Congressman, recognizing the increasing burden being placed on families across his District, organized the summit to network constituents with government agencies and private organizations. More than 300 residents from across the region attended the event where government agencies at all levels were integrated with non-profit organizations to offer access to assistance with housing, student loans, employment, health care, disability aid and other existing support. (A full listing of panelists and exhibitors is attached.)

“As the result of our Nation’s extraordinary economic recession, I have seen families throughout the Seventh Congressional District struggle across three generations to cope with historically high unemployment, record foreclosure rates, loss of pension plans, devalued homes, rising costs of education, expensive health care, and the ever-present threat of increased energy prices,” said the Congressman. “It is time that both citizens and government representatives take action to jump-start this economy, and, to that end, I am committed to networking the many organizations in our region that are chartered to help Americans weather difficult times.”

The Summit kicked off with the recognition of a young man’s exceptional service to the community. The Congressman commended 12-year-old Jordan Glider’s work with the Philadelphia Veteran’s Multi-Service and Education Center (PVMSEC) to provide necessary meals to Veterans in the Philadelphia area for the past three years by raising \$2,500. A Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition presented to Jordan honored his efforts for having “brought our community closer to fulfilling its sacred duty of defending and caring for those who have so honorably stood in harms way for our Nation.”

After recognizing this individual’s outstanding work, a panel discussion led by eight industry experts began, including representatives from Legal Aid, the Social Security Administration, and the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency. In addition, Congressman Sestak welcomed specialists from various private service organizations, including William J. Clark of Philabundance Food Bank and Carol Goertzel of Pathways PA, a group aimed to help women, children and families fight homelessness and become financially independent. These experts discussed a variety of issues ranging from receiving mortgage assistance to paying for higher education and affording health care, and then fielded questions from the audience.

“I have always believed that transparency and communication are the foundation of being a

successful representative,” said Congressman Sestak. “Along with the casework of my District Office and my legislative efforts, I wanted to organize a forum where I could discuss issues directly with my constituents,” said the Congressman. “I am appreciative of the information and counsel provided by the panelists and the exhibitors at the service fair. Our country finds itself in its worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, and only through the integration of individuals, representatives and private and government organizations will we be able to transition into a successful, sustainable 21st century economy.”

After speaking with the panelists, attendees were invited to a service fair where more than 50 agencies gathered to share resources. Constituents were able to connect with organizations such as the U.S. Small Business Administration and Job Corps. Housing issues were a prevalent topic of the day, and specialists from the Fair Housing Rights Center, Home Helpers, and Pathways PA answered questions. In the academic arena, representatives from the Delaware Valley Literacy Council, the Graduate! Philadelphia Center, and the Chester Education Foundation discussed higher education and job training opportunities. To address healthcare concerns, experts such as Diane Perry of the Temple University Institute on Disabilities, representatives from Ches-Penn Health Services and Brent Ennis, Southeastern PA Regional Director of the Pennsylvania Department of health participated.

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.*

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□ Panelists:

Congressman Joe Sestak

Ms. Cheryl Browning , Regional Director, PA Higher Education Assistance Agency

Mr. William J. Clark , Executive Director, Philabundance

Mr. Brent Ennis, Southeastern PA Regional Director, PA Department of Health

Mr. Jim Daugherty, Pennsylvania Territory Manager, Internal Revenue Service

Ms. Carol Goertzel , Executive Director and CEO, Pathways PA

Ms. Patricia Hasson , Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Delaware Valley

Ms. Barbara Stephens, Public Affairs Officer, Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency

Ms. Laurie Watkins, Regional Commissioner, Social Security Administration

### Service Fair Exhibitors:

Anthem Institute

CareerLink

Carelink Community Support Services

Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of the Elderly (CARIE)

Ches-Penn Health Services

Chester Education Foundation

Community Impact Legal Services

Community Transit of Delaware County, Inc.

Congressman Sestak's District Office

Consumer Credit Counseling Services of Delaware Valley (CCCVSDV)

Crozer-Keystone Health System

Delaware County Community Engagement

Delaware County Library System

Delaware County Literacy Council

Department of Education

Department of Public Welfare, Delaware County Assistance Office

Domestic Abuse Project of Delaware County, Inc.

Education Law Center

Elwyn Working Adult Day Services

Fair Acres Geriatric Center

Fair Housing Council of Suburban Philadelphia (FHCSP)

Fair Housing Rights Center

Family Community Services of Delaware County

Find a Nerd

Freedom Valley Disability Center

Graduate! Philadelphia Center

Great Guy Group

HIAS and Council

Holcomb Behavior Health System

Home Helpers

JEVS Supports For Independence

Job Corps

Legal Aid of Southeastern Pennsylvania  
Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry  
Mentor Advantage  
Mid-County Senior Services  
Not to Be Forgotten  
PA AG- Health Care Section  
PA Veterans of Foreign Wars  
PathWaysPA  
Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency  
Philadelphia Energy Company (PECO)  
Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth  
Philadelphia Veterans Multi-Service and Education Center, Inc.  
Planned Parenthood  
Pulse of PA  
Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic  
Salvation Army of Chester  
Social Security Administration  
Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA)  
Temple University, Institute on Disabilities  
The ARC of Delaware County  
Today's Child Learning Centers, Inc.  
U.S. Small Business Administration  
University of Pennsylvania TRIO Veterans Upward Bound  
Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians  
Women's Resource Center of the Delaware Valley  
Women's Way  
Workforce Entry Center